

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A lancing device comprising:

a needle;

a moving member for moving the needle in an advancing direction from a standby position to a puncturing position, the needle being attached to the moving member; and

a housing provided with an inner space arranged to allow the moving member to move within the inner space in the advancing direction and in a retreating direction opposite to the advancing direction;

wherein the moving member moves in close contact with the housing,

wherein the inner space of the housing includes a first space which is offset in the retreating direction from a portion of the housing contacting with the moving member, and a second space which is offset in the advancing direction from the portion of the housing contacting with the moving member;

wherein the moving member is moved in the retreating direction to be brought to the standby position by a pressure difference produced between the first space and the second space, the pressure difference causing the moving member to receive a force directed in the retreating direction.

2. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 1, further comprising a fixing means for fixing the moving member to the housing at the standby position, with an urging force applied in the advancing direction, and also comprising a disengaging means for dissolving the fixing of the moving member,

wherein the moving member is moved from the standby position in the advancing direction by the urging force.

3. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 2, wherein the urging force is applied to the moving member by a resilient member.
4. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 3, wherein the resilient member is a coil spring or a bellows.
5. (Canceled)
6. (Currently Amended) The lancing device according to claim [[5]] 1, wherein the moving member is moved in the retreating direction by making pressure in the first space smaller than pressure in the second space beyond a predetermined value.
7. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 6, wherein the moving member is moved in the retreating direction by making pressure in the first space smaller than atmospheric pressure beyond a predetermined value.
8. (Currently Amended) The lancing device according to claim [[5]] 1, further comprising a negative pressure generating means for generating a negative pressure in the second space.
9. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 8, wherein the negative pressure generating means individually generates negative pressure in the first space and the second space.
10. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 8, wherein the negative pressure generating means generates the negative pressure in the first space for applying a suctioning force to the moving member, so that the moving member is moved to the standby position.
11. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 8, wherein the negative pressure generating means comprises a pump.
12. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 2, wherein air flow into the first space is caused before or on disengaging the moving member by the disengaging means.

13. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 12, wherein the air flow into the first space is caused when the moving member is disengaged by the disengaging means.

14. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 13, wherein the disengaging means comprises an operating portion to be operated to cause the disengaging means to act on the engaging means,

wherein positional selection of the operating portion determines whether the first space is caused to communicate with outside or not to communicate with the outside.

15. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 14, wherein the operating portion is movable in the advancing direction and the retreating direction, with part thereof protruding out of the housing, the operating portion including an engaging part accommodated in the housing,

wherein the housing is formed with a through-hole for allowing the operating portion to move in the advancing direction and in the retreating direction,

wherein the engaging part is used to select between a state in which the engaging part closes the through-hole and a state in which the engaging part does not close the through-hole.

16. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 1, wherein the second space is provided with a retreating means for moving the needle back in the retreating direction after the needle is brought to the puncturing position.

17. (Currently Amended) A lancing device comprising:

a needle;

a moving member for moving the needle in an advancing direction from a standby position to a puncturing position, the needle being attached to the moving member; and

a housing provided with an inner space allowing the moving member to move within the inner space in the advancing direction and in a retreating direction opposite to the advancing direction,

wherein a dividing wall is provided for dividing the inner space of the housing into a first space offset in the retreating direction and a second space offset in the advancing direction,

wherein the moving member is moved in the retreating direction to be brought to the standby position by a pressure difference produced between the first space and the second space, the pressure difference causing the moving member to receive a force directed in the retreating direction.

18. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 17, wherein the dividing wall includes a bellows.

19. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 18, further comprising a fixing means for fixing the moving member to the housing at the standby position, with an urging force applied in the advancing direction,

wherein the moving member is moved from the standby position in the advancing direction by the urging force.

20. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 19, wherein the urging force is applied to the moving member by at least one resilient member.

21. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 20, wherein said at least one resilient member comprises the bellows.

22. (Original) The lancing device according to claim 21, wherein said at least one resilient member further comprises a coil spring.

23. (Previously Presented) The lancing device according to claim 1, further comprising a latch for holding the moving member at the standby position.

24. (Previously Presented) The lancing device according to claim 17, further comprising a latch for holding the moving member at the standby position.

25. (New) The lancing device according to claim 17, wherein the dividing wall is connected between the moving member and the housing.